# Warmley Preschool – Safeguarding and Promoting Children’s Welfare

## Looked after children

### Policy statement

Early years settings are committed to providing quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children and their families. All staff are committed to doing all they can to enable ‘looked after’ children in their care to achieve and reach their full potential.

Definition of ‘Looked after Children’ (LAC): *Children become ‘looked after’ if they have either been taken into care by the local authority, or have been accommodated by the local authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Most LAC will be living in foster homes, but a smaller number may be in a children’s home, living with a relative or even placed back home with their natural parent(s).*

We recognise that children who are being looked after have often experienced traumatic situations; physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. However, we also recognise that not all looked after children have experienced abuse and that there are a range of reasons for children to be taken in to the care of the local authority. Whatever the reason, a child’s separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that has impact on their emotional well-being.

Most local authorities do not place children under five with foster carers who work outside the home; however there are instances when this does occur or where the child has been placed with another family member who works.

In our setting, we place emphasis on promoting *children’s right to be strong, resilient and listened to.* Our policy and practice guidelines for looked after children are based on these two important concepts, *attachment and resilience.* The basis of this is to promote secure attachments in children’s lives as the basis for resilience. These aspects of well-being underpin the child’s responsiveness *to* learning and are the basis in developing positive dispositions *for* learning. For young children to get the most out of educational opportunities they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

### Principles

* The term ‘looked after child’ denotes a child’s current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
* We offer places for funded two, three and four-year-olds that are in care to ensure they receive their entitlement to early education. We expect that a child will have been with a foster carer for a minimum of one month and has formed a secure attachment to the carer. We expect that the placement in the setting will last a minimum of six weeks.
* Where a child who normally attends our setting is taken into care and is cared for by a local foster carer we will continue to offer the placement for the child.

## Adoption of Policy

This policy was adopted as follows:

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| **Meeting of** |  |
| **Date held** |  |
| **Date for review** |  |

Signed on behalf of the management committee:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of Signatory** |  |
| **Signature** |  |
| **Role of Signatory** |  | **Date** |  |